فصول في الصيام
والتراويح والزكاة

Lessons on Fasting, Taraaweeh & Zakaat

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About the Book: This is a complete translation of the booklet ***Fusool fis-Siyaam wat-Taraaweeh waz-Zakaat*** (Lessons on Fasting, Taraaweeh and Zakaat) written by Imaam Muhammad bin Saalih Al-'Uthaimeen, may Allaah have mercy on him. The source used for this on-line publication was the version of the book available on www.binothaimeen.org.

In this treatise, Imaam Ibn Al-'Uthaimeen discusses various topics concerning Ramadaan, such as fasting, the Taraaweeh prayer and Zakaat-ul-Fitr. He also includes two sections on Zakaat and those who are entitled to receive it, since it is the custom of many people to give out their yearly Zakaat during this blessed month of Ramadaan.

The author presents the material broken down into eight short lessons, including proofs and evidences for his points. At times, he goes into detail regarding some issues and gives the correct scholarly opinion with regard to them.

We hope that this treatise can benefit the English speaking Muslims as we are now well into the month of Ramadaan for this year.

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INTRODUCTION

All praise be to Allaah. We praise Him, we seek His assistance and ask for His forgiveness. And we repent to Him and seek refuge in Him from the evils of our selves and the evils of our actions. Whoever Allaah guides, there is no one that can lead him astray, and whoever is lead astray, there is no one that can guide him. I bear witness that there is no deity worthy of worship except Allaah, and I bear witness that Muhammad is His slave and messenger, may the peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him, his family, companions and those who followed them in goodness until the Day of Recompense. To Proceed:

On this occasion of the rapid approach of the blessed month of Ramadaan, we would like to present to our Muslim brothers the following lessons, asking Allaah that He make this deed of ours sincere for His sake alone and in accordance with His Divine Legislation, as well as a source of benefit to His creation. Verily, He is the Most Giving, Most Generous.

The First lesson: The Ruling on Fasting

Fasting during Ramadaan is an obligation that is established in the Book of Allaah, the Sunnah of His Messenger (*sallAllaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*) and the unanimous agreement of the Muslims. Allaah says:

يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُواْ كُتِبَ عَلَيۡكُمُ ٱلصِّيَامُ كَمَا كُتِبَ عَلَى ٱلَّذِينَ مِن
قَبۡلِكُمۡ لَعَلَّكُمۡ تَتَّقُونَ ١٨٣

"O you who believe. Fasting is prescribed for you as it was prescribed for those before you in order that you may gain Taqwaa (fear and dutifulness to Allaah)."

أَيَّامٗا مَّعۡدُودَٰتٖۚ فَمَن كَانَ مِنكُم مَّرِيضًا أَوۡ عَلَىٰ
سَفَرٖ فَعِدَّةٞ مِّنۡ أَيَّامٍ أُخَرَۚ وَعَلَى ٱلَّذِينَ يُطِيقُونَهُۥ
فِدۡيَةٞ طَعَامُ مِسۡكِينٖۖ فَمَن تَطَوَّعَ خَيۡرٗا فَهُوَ خَيۡرٞ لَّهُۥۚ وَأَن تَصُومُواْ
خَيۡرٞ لَّكُمۡۖ إِن كُنتُمۡ تَعۡلَمُونَ ١٨٤

"(Fasting) is for a certain number of days. But if any of you is ill or on a journey, (he should make up) the same amount of missed days on other days. And as for those who are able to fast (but with difficulty), they (have a choice to fast or) they can feed a needy person (for the day missed). But whoever exceeds in good, then that is better for him. And that you fast is better for you if you only knew."

شَهۡرُ رَمَضَانَ ٱلَّذِيٓ أُنزِلَ فِيهِ ٱلۡقُرۡءَانُ هُدٗى لِّلنَّاسِ وَبَيِّنَٰتٖ مِّنَ ٱلۡهُدَىٰ
وَٱلۡفُرۡقَانِۚ فَمَن شَهِدَ مِنكُمُ ٱلشَّهۡرَ فَلۡيَصُمۡهُۖ وَمَن كَانَ مَرِيضًا أَوۡ
عَلَىٰ سَفَرٖ فَعِدَّةٞ مِّنۡ أَيَّامٍ أُخَرَۗ يُرِيدُ ٱللَّهُ بِكُمُ ٱلۡيُسۡرَ وَلَا يُرِيدُ بِكُمُ
ٱلۡعُسۡرَ وَلِتُكۡمِلُواْ ٱلۡعِدَّةَ وَلِتُكَبِّرُواْ ٱللَّهَ عَلَىٰ مَا هَدَىٰكُمۡ وَلَعَلَّكُمۡ
تَشۡكُرُونَ ١٨٥

"The month of Ramadaan in which was revealed the Qur'aan, a guide for mankind and clear proofs for the guidance and criterion. So whoever amongst you sights (the crescent indicating the beginning of the) month (of Ramadaan), must fast it. And whoever amongst you is sick or on a journey, then (he may make up) the same amount of missed days on other days. Allaah wants ease for you and He doesn't want to make things difficult for you. (He wants that you) complete the (required) number of days, and that you thereafter glorify Allaah (with Takbeer during 'Eid) for having guided you." [Surah Al-Baqarah: 183-185]

Also, the Prophet (*sallAllaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*) said: **"Islaam is built upon five (pillars): Testifying that there is no deity worthy of worship except Allaah and that Muhammad is His Messenger; Establishing the Prayer; Giving the Zakaat; Making the Pilgrimage (Hajj) to the House (of Allaah); and Fasting in Ramadaan."** [Agreed Upon]

In the narration found in Saheeh Muslim it reads: **"…Fasting in Ramadaan; and Making the Pilgrimage (Hajj) to the House."**

The Muslims have unanimously agreed on the obligation of fasting in Ramadaan. So whoever rejects the obligation of fasting during Ramadaan, then he is an apostate,

disbeliever, who must seek repentance. So if he repents and agrees to its obligation, he is to be pardoned, but if not, he is to be executed as a disbeliever.

Fasting in Ramadaan was made obligatory in the second year after Hijrah. So altogether, Allaah's Messenger (*sallAllaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*) fasted nine Ramadaans.

Fasting is mandatory on every Muslim that is a sane adult (i.e. he has reached the age of puberty). Therefore, fasting if not obligatory upon a disbeliever, nor will it be accepted from him until he accepts Islaam. Neither is it obligatory for a youth to fast until he reaches the age of puberty. A boy reaches the age of puberty when he turns fifteen years old or with the sprout of pubic hairs or when sexual fluids descend during sleep or elsewhere. A girl reaches the age of puberty with her (first) menstruation. So when one of these things occur in a youth, he/she has reached the age of puberty (and is obligated to fast).

However, children (i.e. under age of puberty) should be ordered to fast, if they are able to and it won't cause harm to them, so that they may grow accustomed and attached to it.

It is also not obligatory on someone who loses sanity, whether due to madness, brain surgery and so on to fast. So based on this, if there is an adult that is delirious and cannot distinguish on his own, he is not obligated to fast or feed needy people (as recompense).

Lesson Two: The Wisdom and Benefits of Fasting

One of Allaah's Names is Al-Hakeem (The Most Wise). This name is given to one who is characterized with the attribute of Wisdom. Wisdom means: Treating affairs with accuracy and precision and putting them in their proper place. This name necessitates that everything that Allaah created and legislated is due to some profound wisdom – whoever knows about it, knows about it and whoever is unaware of it, is unaware of it.

Fasting, which Allaah has prescribed and obligated on His servants, has tremendous aspects of wisdom and numerous benefits.

From the wisdom behind fasting is that: It is an act of worship done for Allaah, in which the *'abd* (servant) draws closer to His Lord by abandoning the things that he loves and desires, such as food, drink and sexual intercourse. This is done in order to achieve His Lord's Pleasure and success in the next life. By doing this, he shows outwardly

that he has chosen what his Lord loves over what he loves, as well as the next life over this life.

And from the wisdom behind fasting is that it is a means of attaining Taqwaa, as Allaah says:

يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُواْ كُتِبَ عَلَيۡكُمُ ٱلصِّيَامُ كَمَا كُتِبَ عَلَى ٱلَّذِينَ مِن قَبۡلِكُمۡ لَعَلَّكُمۡ تَتَّقُونَ ١٨٣

"O you who believe! Fasting is prescribed for you as it was prescribed for those before you, in order that you gain Taqwaa." [Surah Al-Baqarah: 183]

So a fasting person is commanded to have Taqwaa of Allaah, which means obeying His orders and avoiding His prohibitions. This is the greatest goal behind fasting. The objective behind fasting is not to torture a person by having him abandon food, drink and sexual intercourse.

The Prophet (*sallAllaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*) said: **"Whoever does not abandon false speech, acting upon that (falsehood) and ignorance, then Allaah has no need of him abandoning his food and drink."** [Reported by Al-Bukhaaree]

False speech refers to every forbidden type of speech such as lying, backbiting and slandering, as well as other prohibited acts. Acting upon falsehood refers to performing any type of forbidden act such as transgressing against people, betraying, deceiving, beating up people, taking money unjustly and so on. What also falls into this is listening to what is forbidden to listen to such as prohibited songs and musical instruments. Ignorance refers to foolishness, and that means not using the religious guidance in speech and action.

So when a fasting person abides by the requisites of this ayah and hadeeth, the fast becomes a means for him to cultivate his soul, correct his character and rectify his manners. And he will then not come out of the month of Ramadaan except that he finds that his soul, character and manners have been positively affected.

And from the wisdom behind fasting is that a person who has wealth is caused to realize the magnitude of Allaah's blessing on him, such that Allaah made it easy for Him to achieve what he desires from food, drink, sexual intercourse and those things Allaah had permitted in the Religion. So because of this, he becomes grateful to his Lord for these blessings and remembers his destitute brother who is not able to

achieve these things. And this will cause him to be generous with him, by giving him charity and showing kindness to him.

And from the wisdom behind fasting is that it trains one to curb and subject his soul, such that he is able to lead it towards that which is good for it and what will make it prosper in this world and the next. And he distances himself from becoming an animal-like person who cannot control and restrain himself from fulfilling his yearns and desires.

And from the wisdom behind fasting are the health benefits that come as a result of in-taking little food, allowing the digestive system to rest for a specified time, and allowing excess wastes and excrements that are harmful to the body to be discharged.

Lesson Three: The Ruling on a Sick or Traveling Person Fasting

Allaah, the Most High, says:

وَمَن كَانَ مَرِيضًا أَوْ عَلَىٰ سَفَرٍ فَعِدَّةٌ مِّنْ أَيَّامٍ أُخَرَ

يُرِيدُ ٱللَّهُ بِكُمُ ٱلْيُسْرَ وَلَا يُرِيدُ بِكُمُ ٱلْعُسْرَ

"**And whoever amongst you is sick or on a journey, then (he may make up) the same amount of missed days on other days. Allaah wants ease for you and He doesn't want to make things difficult for you."** [Surah Al-Baqarah: 185]

A sick person falls into two types:

First: Whoever has a chronic illness and there is no anticipation of it being cured (near term), like cancer for example, this person is not required to fast. This is because he does not have a condition in which it is expected that he will be able to do it (i.e. the fast). However, for every day missed, he must feed a needy person whether if it is by gathering the same amount of needy people as the days he missed and feeding all of them at once as Anas bin Maalik (*radyAllaahu 'anhu*) used to do when he was old, or it could be by dividing up the food for the needy people according to the days missed and then giving every needy person a quarter of a Prophetic saa', i.e. what weighs about half a kilo and 10 grams of good wheat. It is better if one serves meat or fat along with it in order to compliment the meal. The same applies to an elderly person that is not able to fast, in that he should feed a needy person for every day missed.

Second: Whoever has a temporary illness that they will recover from, such as a fever and what resembles that. This kind of illness has three scenarios:

1. Fasting will not burden or cause harm to him. Such a sick person is obligated to fast since he has no excuse to abandon it.

2. Fasting will be difficult on him but it won't cause any harm to him. In this situation it is detested for him to fast because one is actually refraining from using Allaah's concession (*rukhsah*), while at the same time he is burdening himself.

3. Fasting will harm him. In this situation, it is forbidden for him to fast because of the harm that he will be inflicting upon himself. Allaah says:

وَلَا تَقْتُلُوٓاْ أَنفُسَكُمْۚ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ كَانَ بِكُمْ رَحِيمًا

"And do not kill yourselves. Verily Allaah is All-Merciful to you." [Surah An-Nisaa: 29]

And He says:

وَلَا تُلْقُواْ بِأَيْدِيكُمْ إِلَى ٱلتَّهْلُكَةِ

"And do not throw yourselves into destruction by your own hands." [Surah Al-Baqarah: 195]

And in a hadeeth, the Prophet (*sallAllaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*) said: **"There is to be no harming (of others) nor harm (to oneself)."** Reported by Ibn Maajah and Al-Haakim, and An-Nawawee said: "Its paths of narrations strengthen one another."

One can find out if fasting will be harmful to a sick person by (1) that person feeling it to be harmful on himself or by (2) him being informed of it by a reliable doctor. When a person who falls under this category of being sick breaks his fast, he must make up the number of days he missed when he recovers. But if he dies before he recovers then making up the missed days is no longer binding upon him, since he is only obligated to fast the number of days missed on other days, which he was not able to reach.

A traveler falls into two types:

First: Whoever intends by traveling to cheat his way out of fasting. It is not permissible for such a person to break his fast, since cheating one's way out of Allaah's obligations does not remove those obligations from him.

Second: Whoever does not intend the above by traveling. This person may fall into one of the following three situations:

1. Fasting is extremely difficult upon him. In this case, it is forbidden for him to fast since one time "The Prophet (*sallAllaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*) was fasting while on the military expedition to conquer Makkah, when news reached him that the people found it difficult to fast and they were looking at him to see what he would do. So he (*sallAllaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*) called for a cup of water after 'Asr and drank from it while the people were looking at him. Later it was said to him: 'Some people are still fasting.' So he (*sallAllaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*) replied: **'Those are the disobedient ones. Those are the disobedient ones.'**" [Reported by Muslim]

2. Fasting is difficult upon him, but not so severe. In this situation it is detested (*makrooh*) for him to fast since he is refraining from one of Allaah's concessions, while putting a burden upon himself.

3. Fasting is not difficult upon him. In this case he may do whatever is easiest on him – whether it is fasting or choosing not to fast. This is based on Allaah's statement:

يُرِيدُ ٱللَّهُ بِكُمُ ٱلْيُسْرَ وَلَا يُرِيدُ بِكُمُ ٱلْعُسْرَ

"Allaah wants ease for you and He doesn't want to make things difficult for you." [Surah Al-Baqarah: 185]

The word **"want"** here takes on the meaning of love (i.e. He loves ease for you). If there is no difference between fasting or not fasting, then fasting is more preferable, because this is what the Prophet (*sallAllaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*) did, as is reported in Saheeh Muslim from Abud-Dardaa (*radyAllaahu 'anhu*) who said: "We went out (on a journey) with the Prophet (*sallAllaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*) during Ramadaan under intense heat conditions to the point that each of us would put his hand over his head (to cover it) due to the severe heat (of the sun). And no one would be fasting among us except for the Messenger of Allaah (*sallAllaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*) and 'Abdullaah bin Rawaaha."

A traveler is considered to be traveling from the time he leaves his country to the time he returns to it. And if he takes up residency in the land he travels to for a period of

time, he is considered to be traveling as long as he holds the intention that he will never reside there after the objective for which he traveled there for in the first place is fulfilled.

So he is entitled to all of the allowances a traveler has even if the length of his residency extends for a long time. This is since the Prophet (*sallAllaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*) did not mention any time limit defining when a travel ends. And the foundation with regard to this issue is that one remains in a traveler's state and under its rules until there comes a proof that the travel has ended and that its rules fail to apply.

There is no difference in breaking the fast while traveling between a time-constrained travel, such as Hajj, 'Umrah, visiting a relative, business travel, and so on and between a continuous travel, such as journeys made by car service drivers such as taxis or other larger forms of transportation (i.e. buses). When these drivers exit from their countries, they all enter into the state of travelers and it is permissible for them to do whatever other travelers are permitted to do, such as not fasting during Ramadaan, shortening the four rak'ah prayers into two rak'ahs, and combining the Dhuhr and 'Asr prayers and Maghrib and 'Ishaa prayers, when there is a need for it.

Abstaining from the fast is better for them than fasting, if that is easier for them. And they can make up the days missed during the winter. This is because these car service drivers have their own country, which they ascribe to. So when they are in their country, then they are considered residents and whatever applies for or against all other residents also applies for and against them. And when they travel, they are considered travelers and whatever applies in favor or against travelers also applies in favor or against them.

Lesson Four: The Things that break One's Fast

The things that break one's fast are seven:

1. Sexual Intercourse: This Is when the penis enters the vagina. So when a fasting person has sexual intercourse, his fast becomes broken. Furthermore, if this sexual intercourse occurs during the day of Ramadaan, when fasting is obligatory, he is required to perform the mandatory atonement for the vileness of his act, which is freeing a slave. If he is not able to, then he must fast two consecutive months (after Ramadaan). If he cannot do this, he must feed sixty needy people. However, if a person is not obligated to fast, such as a traveler, and he has intercourse with his wife while fasting, he must make up the missed day and doesn't have to perform this atonement.

2. When sexual fluid descends due to fondling, kissing, hugging and so on. But if one kisses his wife and no sexual fluids descend then nothing is binding on him.

3. Eating and Drinking: This is when food or drink is transported into the interior of the body, whether by way of the mouth or the nose[1] depending on what is being drunk or eaten. It is not permissible for a fasting person to inhale the smoke of incense (*bukhoor*) such that it will enter into his interior, since smoke is a substance. But as for smelling pleasant fragrances and perfumes then there is no harm (sin) in this.

4. Whatever bears the same function as eating or drinking such as nutritive injections, which serve as food and drink supplement. But as for injections that are not alimental or nutritive, they do not cause one to break the fast regardless of whether they are injected through the veins or the muscles.

5. Emitting blood due to Hijaamah (Cupping): According to analogy, all forms of emitting blood intentionally, which affects the body like Hijaamah does, applies to this. As for the emission of a small amount of blood as part of a medical examination, and so on, this does not break the fast since it does not affect the body by weakening it, as is the case with Hijaamah.

6. Vomiting Intentionally: This means releasing out what food and drink is in the stomach.

7. The release of blood from **menstruation** and **postpartum bleeding**.

A fasting person does not break his fast with any of the above unless he first meets three conditions:

1. He must be aware of its ruling and the time that it applies to.
2. He must remember (i.e. not accountable for forgetfulness)
3. He must do it intentionally and willingly

So if a person performs Hijaamah and doesn't think that the Hijaamah breaks his fast, then his fast is still valid since he is just unaware of its ruling. Allaah says:

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[1] **Translator's Note:** Shaikh-ul-Islaam Ibn Taimiyyah, may Allaah have mercy on him, said: "It is also authentically established in the texts from the narration of Laqeet bin Sabrah that the Prophet said: **'And go deep in inhaling water in the nose unless you are fasting.'** This indicates that if water descends (to the body) through the nose, a person's fast is broken. This is the view of the majority of the scholars." [*Haqeeqat-us-Siyaam*: pg. 12] Al-Albaanee declared the above hadeeth authentic in Saheeh Sunan Abee Dawood (no. 130).

وَلَيْسَ عَلَيْكُمْ جُنَاحٌ فِيمَآ أَخْطَأْتُم بِهِۦ وَلَٰكِن مَّا تَعَمَّدَتْ قُلُوبُكُمْ

"There is no sin on you in those matters in which you err, but rather only those which your hearts deliberately intend." [Surah Al-Ahzaab 5]
And He says:

رَبَّنَا لَا تُؤَاخِذْنَآ إِن نَّسِينَآ أَوْ أَخْطَأْنَا

"Our Lord, do not punish us if we forget or err." [Surah Al-Baqarah: 286]

Also, it is reported in the two Saheeh Collections that 'Adee bin Haatim (*radyAllaahu 'anhu*) placed a white and a black thread under his pillow and then begin to eat and look at them. So when one of them would become distinct from the other he would refrain from eating, thinking that this is what was meant by Allaah's statement:

وَٱشْرَبُوا۟ حَتَّىٰ يَتَبَيَّنَ لَكُمُ ٱلْخَيْطُ ٱلْأَبْيَضُ مِنَ ٱلْخَيْطِ ٱلْأَسْوَدِ
مِنَ ٱلْفَجْرِ ۖ ثُمَّ أَتِمُّوا۟ ٱلصِّيَامَ إِلَى ٱلَّيْلِ

"And eat and drink until the white thread (light of dawn) becomes distinct to you from the black thread (darkness of night). Then complete your fast until the nightfall." [Surah Al-Baqarah: 187]

When the Prophet (*sallAllaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*) was informed of this, he said: **"This only refers to the whiteness of the daylight and the blackness of the night."** And he did not order him to repeat his fast.

And if someone eats thinking that Fajr didn't come yet or that the sun has set, but then the opposite of what he thought becomes clear to him, his fast is still valid since he was unaware of the time. It is recorded in Saheeh Al-Bukhaaree that Asmaa bin Abee Bakr (*radyAllaahu 'anhaa*) said: **"We broke our fast once during the time of the Prophet on a foggy day, then the sun appeared to us (i.e. it had not set yet)."** So if making up that fast was obligatory, the Prophet (*sallAllaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*) would have clarified it to us, since Allaah perfected the Religion through him. And had the Prophet (*sallAllaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*) clarified it, the Companions would have transmitted it since Allaah entrusted them with safeguarding the Religion. So since the Companions did not transmit it, we come to know that it is not obligatory. Also, there

are many reasons that call for knowledge of it to be transmitted due to its importance, so it would not be possible for it to be forgotten.

And if one is forgetful while fasting he does not break his fast. This is based on the Prophet's statement: **"Whoever forgets while fasting and eats or drinks, then he must continue and complete his fast, for indeed it was only Allaah who fed him and gave him to drink."** [Agreed Upon]

If someone is forced to eat, or if he rinses his mouth and some water escapes into his stomach or some drops of water go in his eyes and escape into his body interior, or he has a wet dream and some semen comes out, then in all of these cases a person's fast is till valid since all of these occurred without him doing them intentionally or willingly.

A fasting person does not break his fast by using the Siwaak. Rather it is Sunnah for him as well as others to use it at any time – in the beginning or at the end of the day. It is also permissible for a fasting person to do that which will alleviate the severity of heat and thirst from him, such as wiping himself with cold water and so on. The Prophet (*sallAllaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*) would pour water over his head while fasting due to thirst. And Ibn 'Umar (*radyAllaahu 'anhu*) would wet a garment and place it on himself while fasting. This is from the ease that Allaah intended for us. And to Allaah belongs the praise and gratitude for the blessings and ease He grants.

Lesson Five: Concerning the Taraaweeh Prayer

Taraaweeh refers to performing the night prayer in congregation during the month of Ramadaan. The time that it may occur is from after the 'Ishaa prayer until the commencement of Fajr. The Prophet (*sallAllaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*) encouraged us to perform the night prayer during Ramadaan such that he said: **"Whoever performs the Night Prayer in Ramadaan with Faith and while seeking to be rewarded, will have all of his past sins forgiven."**

And in Saheeh Al-Bukhaaree, 'Aa'ishah (*radyAllaahu 'anhaa*) reported that: "The Prophet (*sallAllaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*) performed the night prayer one night in the masjid and led the people in prayer. Then he prayed the next night and the people increased. Then the people gathered on the third or fourth night but he (*sallAllaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*) did not go out to them. The next morning he said: **'I saw what you people did (last night) and nothing prevented me from going out to you except that I feared that it would be made obligatory on you.'**" This occurred during Ramadaan.

The Sunnah is to limit the Night Prayer to eleven rak'aat, making the Tasleem after every two rak'ahs. This is because when 'Aa'ishah (*radyAllaahu 'anhaa*) was asked about the Prophet's prayer during Ramadaan, she replied: **"He (*sallAllaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*) would not exceed eleven rak'aat in or out of Ramadaan."** [Agreed Upon]

And in the Muwatta, Muhammad bin Yoosuf, who is reliable and trustworthy, reported from Saa'ib bin Yazeed (*radyAllaahu 'anhu*), who was a Companion, that 'Umar (*radyAllaahu 'anhu*) ordered Ubay bin Ka'ab and Tameem Ad-Daaree to lead the people in prayer performing eleven rak'aat.

If one chooses to exceed the number of eleven rak'aat, then there is no harm in this because the Prophet (*sallAllaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*) was asked about the Night Prayer once and replied: **"It is two by two (rak'ahs). Then if one fears that morning will befall him, he should pray one rak'ah, which will make what he prayed Witr (an odd number)."** [Transmitted in the two Saheeh Collections]

However, preserving and sticking to the number that is reported in the Sunnah, while performing it slowly and lengthening it, in a manner that doesn't burden the people is better and more complete.

As for what some people do such as rushing through the prayer in an exaggerated manner, then this is contrary to what has been prescribed in the Religion. If praying in this manner causes him to leave out one of requirements or pillars of the prayer, he has invalidated his prayer. [2]

Many of the Imaams that lead prayer do not take their time with the Taraaweeh Prayer, and this is an error on their part. This is since the Imaam is not just leading himself in prayer, rather he is leading himself and others. So he is like a leader – he is required to do what is most beneficial and appropriate. The scholars have mentioned that it is detested for the Imaam to rush through the prayer to the point where those following him in prayer cannot do the acts they are obligated to do.

The people should persevere in establishing this Taraaweeh Prayer and not cause it to go to waste by going from masjid to masjid, for indeed whoever performs the Night Prayer with the Imaam until he finishes, it is written that he prayed the entire night even though he may go to sleep after the prayer is over.

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[2] **Translator's Note:** Refer to the E-Book on Al-Ibaanah.Com, **"The Conditions, Pillars and Requirements of the Prayer"**, of Imaam Muhammad bin 'Abdil-Wahhaab (*rahimahullaah*) for a list of the pillars and requirements of the prayer.

There is no harm in women attending the Taraaweeh Prayer if they do not fear fitnah, on the condition that they come out of their homes covered properly and not indecently exposing their adornment or perfumed.

Lesson Six: Concerning Zakaat and Its Benefits

Zakaat is one of the obligations of Islaam. It is also one of its (five) pillars, and the most important amongst them after the Testimonies of Faith and the Prayer. Proof for its obligation can be found in the Book of Allaah, the Sunnah of His Messenger and the unanimous consensus of the Muslims. So whoever rejects its obligation is a disbeliever who has apostated from Islaam, and he should be made to repent, and if not then he should be killed. And whoever is cheap with giving it or minimizes any portion that is due from it, then he is from the wrongdoers who are deserving of Allaah's punishment.

Allaah says:

وَلَا يَحْسَبَنَّ ٱلَّذِينَ يَبْخَلُونَ بِمَآ ءَاتَىٰهُمُ ٱللَّهُ مِن فَضْلِهِۦ هُوَ
خَيْرًا لَّهُم ۖ بَلْ هُوَ شَرٌّ لَّهُمْ ۖ سَيُطَوَّقُونَ مَا بَخِلُوا۟ بِهِۦ يَوْمَ ٱلْقِيَـٰمَةِ ۗ
وَلِلَّهِ مِيرَٰثُ ٱلسَّمَـٰوَٰتِ وَٱلْأَرْضِ ۗ وَٱللَّهُ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ خَبِيرٌ ﴿١٨٠﴾

"And let not those who hold back miserly from giving that which Allaah has bestowed on them from His Bounty think that it is good for them. Nay, it will be worse for them. The things that they held back from giving will be tied to their necks like a collar on the Day of Recompense. And to Allaah belongs the heritage of the heavens and the earth, and Allaah is well-Aware of all that you do." [Surah Aali 'Imraan: 180]

And in Saheeh Al-Bukhaaree, Abu Hurairah (*radyAllaahu 'anhu*) reported that Allaah's Messenger (*sallAllaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*) said: **"Whoever Allaah has given money to and does not give his Zakaat for it, it will take the form of a shiny-headed male serpent with two black spots over its eyes, which will encircle him on the Day of Judgement and bite his cheeks saying: 'I am your money, I am your wealth.'"**

Allaah says:

وَٱلَّذِينَ يَكْنِزُونَ ٱلذَّهَبَ وَٱلْفِضَّةَ وَلَا يُنفِقُونَهَا فِى سَبِيلِ ٱللَّهِ فَبَشِّرْهُم بِعَذَابٍ أَلِيمٍ
يَوْمَ يُحْمَىٰ عَلَيْهَا فِى نَارِ جَهَنَّمَ فَتُكْوَىٰ بِهَا جِبَاهُهُمْ وَجُنُوبُهُمْ
وَظُهُورُهُمْ ۖ هَٰذَا مَا كَنَزْتُمْ لِأَنفُسِكُمْ فَذُوقُوا۟ مَا كُنتُمْ تَكْنِزُونَ ﴿٣٥﴾

"And those who hoard up gold and silver and do not spend on them in the Way of Allaah (i.e. by giving Zakaat), give them the tidings of a painful punishment. This will be on the Day when those treasures (i.e. gold and silver) will be heated in the Fire of Hell and with it their foreheads, bodies and backs will be branded. (And it will be said to them): 'This is the treasure that you hoarded for yourselves, so taste what you used to hoard." [Surah At-Tawbah: 34]

And in Saheeh Muslim, Abu Hurairah (*radyAllaahu 'anhu*) reported that the Prophet (*sallAllaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*) said: **"There is no one that possesses gold and silver and doesn't give his due (Zakaat) on it except that on the Day of Judgement, it will be made into plates of fire, then dipped into the Fire of Hell and with it his body, forehead and back will be branded. Each time the plates grow cool, they will be reheated and brand him again. This will occur on a Day the length of fifty thousand years, until Allaah judges His servants."**

Zakaat has many religious, behavioral and communal benefits of which we will mention the following from them:

From its religious benefits are:

1. It is abiding by one of the pillars of Islaam, upon which rests an individual's prosperity in this worldly life and the Hereafter.

2. It brings a servant close to his Lord and increases his Faith. This is the case with all of the acts of worship.

3. What comes as a result of doing it, such as great reward. Allaah says:

يَمْحَقُ ٱللَّهُ ٱلرِّبَوٰا۟ وَيُرْبِى ٱلصَّدَقَٰتِ ۗ

"Allaah will wipe away (the reward) of usury and increase that of charity (i.e. Zakaat)." [Surah Al-Baqarah: 276]

And He says:

وَمَآ ءَاتَيْتُم مِّن رِّبًا لِّيَرْبُوَا۟ فِىٓ أَمْوَٰلِ ٱلنَّاسِ فَلَا يَرْبُوا۟ عِندَ ٱللَّهِ ۖ
وَمَآ ءَاتَيْتُم مِّن زَكَوٰةٍ تُرِيدُونَ وَجْهَ ٱللَّهِ فَأُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ هُمُ ٱلْمُضْعِفُونَ

"And that which you give as a gift (to others) in order that it may increase (your wealth by expecting something in return) from other people's property, has no increase with Allaah. But that which you give in Zakaat sincerely for the sake of Allaah, those people shall have manifold increase." [Surah Ar-Room: 39]

The Prophet (*sallAllaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*) said: **"Whoever gives away charity the size of a date, which is earned lawfully, since Allaah only accepts the good lawful things, Allaah will indeed take it with His right Hand and cause it to grow for its owner, just as one of you raises up his colt, to the point that the charity will become like the size of a mountain."** [Reported by Al-Bukhaaree and Muslim]

4. Allaah wipes away the (minor) sins by way of it, as the Prophet (*sallAllaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*) said: **"Giving charity wipes away sins just as water extinguishes fire."** The word charity (*sadaqah*) here refers to the Zakaat as well as the supererogatory form of charity.

From the benefits it has on a person's character are:

1. It causes him to follow the way of the generous individuals possessing kindness and magnanimity.

2. Giving the Zakaat requires a person to characterize himself with the attributes of mercy and sympathy towards his destitute brothers, and Allaah shows mercy to those who have mercy on others.

3. What has been witnessed is that giving financial and physical support to Muslims causes the hearts to become open and the soul to be pleased. And it causes a person to become loved and respected according to the extent of support he gives to his fellow brothers.

4. Giving Zakaat cleanses one's character from stinginess and miserliness, as Allaah says:

خُذْ مِنْ أَمْوَالِهِمْ صَدَقَةً تُطَهِّرُهُمْ وَتُزَكِّيهِم

“Take the charity (Zakaat) from their wealth in order to purify and cleanse them by way of it.” [Surah At-Tawbah: 103]

From its communal benefits is that

1. Zakaat provides for the needs of the poor who are the majority of people in most countries.

2. Zakaat strengthens the Muslims and raises their status. This is why one of the areas Zakaat can be given in is Jihaad in the Cause of Allaah, as we will mention later, by the Will of Allaah.

3. It removes the grudges and ill feelings found in the hearts of the poor and destitute. This is since when the poor see the money the wealthy have and their not benefiting them with it, by giving them neither a little nor a lot, then it is likely that they will hold hatred and rancor for the wealthy as they did not enforce their rights or provide for their needs. But when the wealthy do give some of their money to them at the beginning of every year (i.e. after holding the wealth for a year’s time), these things terminate and there comes about love and harmony.

4. Giving Zakaat boosts one’s wealth and increases it’s blessedness, as is stated in the hadeeth from the Prophet (*sallAllaahu ‘alayhi wa sallam*) in which he said: **“Charity does not detract from one’s wealth.”** This means that even though charity (Zakaat) takes away from one’s wealth numerically, it indeed never takes away from its blessedness or its increasing in the future. Rather, Allaah will replace what he gave away and bless his wealth.

5. Zakaat is a means for spreading and distributing wealth (throughout the community). This is since if some wealth is given out, its range is broadened and many people benefit from it, contrary to when the wealth is just preserved amongst the rich, since the poor will not gain any part of it.

All of these benefits that come from giving Zakaat show clearly that Zakaat is something necessary and required in order to rectify the individual and the society. How perfect is Allaah, the All-Knowing and Most Wise!

Zakaat is required to be given on specific forms of wealth, which include:

1. Gold and silver, on the condition that they meet the *nisaab* (minimum requirement). With regard to gold, the nisaab is 11 3/7 Saudi pounds, and for silver it is 56 Saudi Riyals worth of silver or whatever equals that amount from other forms of paper currency. One is obligated to pay a quarter of a tenth Zakaat on the above (i.e. 2.5%). It makes no difference if the gold and silver come in the form of cash, coins or jewelry.

Furthermore, one must pay Zakaat on a woman's gold and silver jewelry if it meets the *nisaab*, regardless of whether she wears that jewelry or lends it out. The reason for this is because the evidences that mandate that Zakaat be paid on gold and silver are general and not detailed. And it is also because there are specific ahaadeeth that indicate the obligation of giving Zakaat on jewelry, even if it is worn, such as what has been reported by 'Abdullaah bin 'Amr bin al-'Aas (*radyAllaahu 'anhu*) that:

"A woman once came to the Prophet (*sallAllaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*) with her daughter who had two gold bangles on her hand. So the Prophet (*sallAllaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*) said: **'Do you pay Zakaat on this?'** She said: 'No.' So he (*sallAllaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*) said: **'Would it please you if Allaah made you wear two bangles of fire instead?'** So she took them of and said: 'They are for Allaah and His Messenger.'" [It is stated in Buloogh-ul-Maraam: "Reported by the Three[3] and its chain of narration is strong."]

Another reason is because this is more cautious and the most cautious approach takes precedence.

2. Also from the wealth that one is obligated to pay Zakaat on is: Business merchandise, which includes everything that is prepared for business purposes, such as real estate property, automobiles, livestock, household goods and other types of wealth. It is obligatory to pay a quarter of a tenth (i.e. 2.5%) on these items.

After holding the item for one year, one must estimate how much it is worth and pay 2.5% (Zakaat) on it, regardless of whether it now costs more, less or the same amount as what he originally paid for it. As for the items he prepares for his personal use or which he leases, such as real estate property, automobiles, appliances and so on, then there is no Zakaat due on them based on the Prophet's (*sallAllaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*) statement: **"A Muslim is not obligated to pay Zakaat on his slave or his horse."**

However, Zakaat is due on things that are rented, when their year time-limit is reached, as well as on gold and silver due to what was stated previously.

[3] **Translator's Note:** Meaning Abu Dawood, An-Nasaa'ee and At-Tirmidhee

Lesson Seven: Those who are entitled to receive the Zakaat

The people entitled to Zakaat are those places we can direct our Zakaat to. Allaah took charge of explaining for Himself what these places are, saying:

﴿ إِنَّمَا ٱلصَّدَقَٰتُ لِلْفُقَرَآءِ وَٱلْمَسَٰكِينِ وَٱلْعَٰمِلِينَ عَلَيْهَا وَٱلْمُؤَلَّفَةِ قُلُوبُهُمْ وَفِى ٱلرِّقَابِ وَٱلْغَٰرِمِينَ وَفِى سَبِيلِ ٱللَّهِ وَٱبْنِ ٱلسَّبِيلِ ۖ فَرِيضَةً مِّنَ ٱللَّهِ ۗ وَٱللَّهُ عَلِيمٌ حَكِيمٌ ﴿٦٠﴾

"The charity (Zakaat) is only for the poor, the needy, those employed to collect (the Zakaat), those whose hearts will be inclined (towards Islaam, by giving them Zakaat), for slaves, for those in debt, for (Jihaad in) the Cause of Allaah, and for the wayfarer (i.e. destitute traveler). It is an obligation imposed by Allaah, and Allaah is the All-Knower, the All-Wise." [Surah At-Tawbah: 60]

1. The Poor (*Fuqaraa*): They are those who are not able to support themselves with sufficient means, except for very little, which is less than half (a year). So if a person cannot find that which will support himself and his family for at least half a year, he is considered poor (*faqeer*) and he should be given what will suffice him and his family for a year.

2. The Needy (*Masaakeen*): They are those who are able to support themselves with sufficient means for half of the year or more, but not enough for the entire year. So they should receive support that will complete the year for them. If a person does not have any cash on him, but yet has some other source of income, such as a profession, a salary or investment profits that will support him financially, he should not be given Zakaat. This is based on the Prophet's statement: **"There is no share in it (i.e. the Zakaat) for a wealthy person or for a strong able-bodied person who can earn a living."**

3. Those employed to collect the Zakaat: They are the ones put in charge by the ruler of a country to collect the Zakaat from those who owe it, distribute it to those who are entitled to it, guard the funds and all other types of duties involved with the supervision of Zakaat. So they should be given a portion of the Zakaat in accordance with the work they put in, even if they may already be wealthy.

4. Those whose hearts will be inclined: This refers to tribal and clan leaders, who do not have strong Faith. They should be given Zakaat so as to strengthen their Faith, which will make them callers to Islaam and good role models. But what if a person is weak in his Islaam, and he is not from the leaders who are followed and obeyed, but rather from the common folk, should he be given some Zakaat in order to strengthen his Faith?

Some scholars hold that it should be given to him since benefiting one's religion is better than benefiting one's body. Look at the example of a poor person. He is given Zakaat in order to nourish his body. So nourishing someone's heart with Faith is greater and of more benefit. However some scholars hold that he should not be given the Zakaat since the benefit of strengthening his Faith is a personal benefit that is specific to him alone.

5. Slaves: What falls under this is buying slaves using Zakaat funds in order to free them, as well as assisting in the liberation of Muslim war captives.

6. Those in debt: They are the ones who owe debts. This is on the condition that they do not possess that which will enable them to remove their debts. So these people should be given enough (Zakaat) that will relieve them of their debt, whether it is a small or large amount, even if they may be wealthy due to their livelihood. So in the case where there is a man who has some income that is enough for the livelihood of himself and his family, but he has some debt that he cannot repay, he may be given sufficient Zakaat that will remove his debt from him. However, it is not permissible for a person who is owed money by a poor person to cancel that person's debt, intending to give his share of Zakaat by that.

The scholars have differed regarding the case where the one in debt is someone's father or son. Can he be given Zakaat in order to remove his debt? The correct opinion is that it is permissible. It is permissible for a person who owes Zakaat to go to the creditor (person owed the debt) and pay him back the loan of the indebted without the latter being aware of it. This is on the condition that the person owing Zakaat knows that the indebted one is unable to repay his debt.

7. In the Cause of Allaah: This refers to Jihaad in the Cause of Allaah. So those who fight in Jihaad should be given a portion of the Zakaat that will suffice them for their Jihaad and enable them to buy the necessary tools for Jihaad in the Cause of Allaah.

What also falls under "the Cause of Allaah" is religious knowledge. So a student of Islamic knowledge should be given that which will enable him to seek knowledge, such

as books and so on. This is unless he already has money of his own that will enable him to achieve that.

8. The Wayfarer: This refers to a traveler that has been cut off from his journey. So he should be given enough Zakaat that will enable him to return to his homeland.

These are the people who are entitled to receive Zakaat, the ones whom Allaah has mentioned in His Book and informed us that this is an obligation that He mandated, which stems from His knowledge and wisdom. And Allaah is All-Knowing, All-Wise.

It is not permissible to direct the Zakaat to any other place, such as towards building masaajid or fixing roads. This is because Allaah has told us those who are entitled to receive the Zakaat for the purpose of limiting them to just those mentioned. So this limitation indicates that we are to negate all other potential recipients that due not fall under this limitation.

If we were to reflect on those individuals that we may give Zakaat to, we would come to realize that among them are those who are in need of the Zakaat for personal use as well as those who are in need of it for the Muslims generally. So by this, we can see the extent of wisdom behind the requirement of Zakaat. And we would come to know that the wisdom behind Zakaat is to build a complete and upright society, as best as possible. And that Islaam does not disregard money or the benefits that can be generated from wealth, nor does it leave greedy and stingy souls to go about freely an unchecked with their stinginess and vain desires. On the contrary, it is the greatest guiding force towards the good and betterment of nations. And all praise is due to Allaah, Lord of the universe.

Lesson Eight: Concerning Zakaat-ul-Fitr

Zakaat-ul-Fitr is an obligation that Allaah's Messenger (*sallAllaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*) mandated at the end of Ramadaan (i.e. Day of 'Eid-ul-Fitr). 'Abdullaah bin 'Umar (*radyAllaahu 'anhumaa*) reported: **"The Messenger of Allaah** (*sallAllaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*) **obligated (Zakaat) al-Fitr of Ramadaan upon every slave, free person, male, female, child and adult among the Muslims."** [Agreed Upon]

Zakaat-ul-Fitr consists of a saa' of food, particularly the produce that humans uproot from the earth. Abu Sa'eed Al-Khudree (*radyAllaahu 'anhu*) reported: **"During the time of the Prophet** (*sallAllaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*)**, we used to give out a *saa'* of food on the Day of Fitr (i.e. 'Eid). And our food (at that time) used to be barley, raisins, dried curds and dates."** [Reported by Al-Bukhaaree]

So it doesn't count to give the Zakaat in the form of money, blankets, clothes, food, meat products and so on because this is contrary to what the Prophet (*sallAllaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*) ordered. And the Prophet (*sallAllaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*) said: **"Whoever performs a deed that is not in conformity with our Command (i.e. Sunnah), then it is rejected"**, meaning the act is returned back to him. The weight of one *saa'* is two kilos and forty grams of good wheat. This is the prophetic weight of one *saa'*, which the Prophet (*sallAllaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*) defined for giving for Zakaat-ul-Fitr. [4]

It is obligatory to give out the Zakaat-ul-Fitr before the 'Eid Prayer. It is more preferable to give it out on the actual day of 'Eid, before the Prayer. It is also permissible to give it out before the Day of 'Eid by one or two days only, and it is not valid to give it after the 'Eid Prayer. This is based on the hadeeth of Ibn 'Abbaas (*radyAllaahu 'anhu*) that the Prophet (*sallAllaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*) **"obligated Zakaat-ul-Fitr as a purification for the person fasting from vain speech, immoral acts and as a means of feeding the needy people. So whoever gives it before the ('Eid) Prayer, then it is an accepted Zakaat. And whoever gives it after the ('Eid) Prayer, then it is considered one of the forms of charity."** [Reported by Abu Dawood and Ibn Maajah]

However, if he doesn't know its 'Eid until after the ('Eid) Prayer, or if at the time of its distribution he is in a land or a country in which it is not required, it is permissible for him to give it after the ('Eid) Prayer, when he is able to give it.

And Allaah knows best. May the peace and blessings of Allaah be on our Prophet, Muhammad, his family and Companions.

[End of Treatise]

[4] **Translator's Note:** A *Saa'* consists of four *amdaad* (pl. of *mudd*). A *mudd* is a equal to one handful using two hands cupped together of an average-sized man.